Life Along the Nile

How natural resources shaped daily life in ancient Egypt

6-9.WH.3.1 "Explain how people historically relied on their natural resources to meet their needs."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three natural resources in the passage. Then write 1, 2, and 3 beside three sentences that show how people used those resources to meet a need.

What the Nile Made Possible

1. Each summer in ancient Egypt, the Nile River rose and spread across nearby fields. When the water fell, it left a layer of rich silt, fine soil that helped crops grow. Farmers planted grains such as wheat and barley in this soil. They also dug channels to carry river water to fields during dry months. These resources helped families grow food in a land with little rain. Without the river's water and silt, farming in much of the valley would have been far harder.

2. The Nile provided more than farmland. Along its banks grew papyrus, a tall plant with sturdy stems. Egyptians cut the stems into strips and pressed them into sheets for writing. They also wove papyrus into baskets that carried and stored goods. Nearby mud could be mixed with straw, shaped into bricks, and dried in the sun. Builders used these bricks for many homes, since stone was more costly to cut and move. People met needs for records, storage, and shelter with materials found close to home.

3. The river itself was a route between settlements. Boats carried grain from farming areas to towns where people needed food. They could also move heavy loads more easily by water than across desert ground. Yet depending on the Nile brought risks. If a flood was too low, fields received less water and less fresh silt, so harvests could shrink. Egyptians responded by storing grain from better harvests and using channels to guide water. The same natural resource that supported daily life could also limit it when conditions changed.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the silt left by the Nile help families meet their need for food?

2. How did Egyptians use papyrus to meet two different needs?

3. How did people use nearby mud to meet their need for shelter?

4. How could a low Nile flood make it harder to get food, and what did Egyptians do to reduce that risk?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a historical community on a rocky coast with cold seawater, fish, nearby forests, and little farmland. In four sentences, explain how people could use two different natural resources to meet two different needs, and describe one challenge that could make meeting a need harder.

ANSWER KEY

Life Along the Nile

GRADES 6-9 · 6-9.WH.3.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three natural resources in the passage. Then write 1, 2, and 3 beside three sentences that show how people used those resources to meet a need. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the silt left by the Nile help families meet their need for food?	**The silt made the soil good for growing crops such as wheat and barley, which provided food.**
2	How did Egyptians use papyrus to meet two different needs?	**They made sheets for writing records and baskets for carrying and storing goods.**
3	How did people use nearby mud to meet their need for shelter?	**They mixed mud with straw, shaped and dried it into bricks, and used the bricks to build homes.**
4	How could a low Nile flood make it harder to get food, and what did Egyptians do to reduce that risk?	**A low flood left fields with less water and fresh silt, so harvests could shrink. Egyptians stored grain from better harvests and used channels to guide water.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

People could catch fish from the sea and dry them to save food for later. They could cut trees from the nearby forest to build shelters. The fish would meet a need for food, while the trees would provide building materials. Storms could keep boats ashore, making it harder to catch enough fish.

For the marking job, accept any three natural resources paired with sentences that explain their use. For Your Turn, accept plausible historical uses of two stated resources that meet different needs, plus a relevant challenge.